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| Halifax County Schools |
| Early Elementary |
| Developmental Project |
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| **Sean Murphy, Melissa Harris, Christina Williams, Yolanda Wiggins, Hope Walker, Ashaki Mitchell, and Annabel Bello** |
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| This document depicts the study of Early childhood education in the Halifax County School district. The study reviews the curriculum, instructional practices and parental programs within the Halifax system. |

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**District Programming Information**

**A. Programs**

**White Oak Parent-Child Center (Birth- Five)**. White Oak Parent-Child Center, a program of the Halifax-Warren Smart Start Partnership for Children, Inc provides a model early childhood program based on developmentally appropriate best practices. The staff creates a nurturing environment where children are encouraged to reach their full potential. The program focuses on children learning through play and the exploration of their environment. Children have the opportunity to become independent and learn to successfully solve problems. They also, learn to express their ideas and feelings.

The center is a Five Star center, licensed to serve 58 students from birth to five. It has a Child Care Resource and Referral Lending Library. This collection of books, educational toys, and other materials available to parents and child care teachers within the community are readily available for check-out, so children can experience educational learning at home.

**Smart Start (Pre-K Only)** Developed from decades of research, Smart Start meets the developmental needs of students between the ages of 3-4. Although program is focused on developing students, the program strives to empower teachers to become leaders.

* Creative Curriculum
  + Designed instruction that nurtures the various developmental needs of young students, including cognitive, social/emotional, and physical and language development. This includes not only instruction, but physical interaction as well. Students are immersed in learning by interacting with their environment, transitioning between different learning stations in the classroom.
  + Teachers are provided with a detailed rubric that targets different learning standards. These include literacy, math, arts, technology and social studies. Equally important, the columns of the rubric list different learning modalities and activities that can be used to meet goals. A copy of the rubric can be in the “one-sheeter” included in the Halifax County NELA Fellows Fall Packet.
  + Teachers collect data throughout the school year on students’ developmental progress. As students meet complete an activity in the rubric (for example, takes on pretend roles and situations).
* Classroom set-up
  + Professionals from the state design and personally construct classrooms in Halifax County Elementary schools. These classrooms, once set up, include designated areas for targeted learning. In other words, different developmental needs (for instance, the arts). This provides students with a chance to enact imaginative play (learning through acting) and teachers the chance to facilitate learning.
  + Periodically throughout the school year classrooms are evaluated on a number of standards to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of a creative learning environment.
* Professional development of goals
  + Teachers are offered training on the most up-to-date health and safety requirements and teaching techniques.
* Pre-evaluation by training coordinator

**B. Vocabulary**

**504 Plan:**  Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the [A](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fspecialchildren.about.com%2Fod%2Fdisabilityrights%2Fqt%2Fada.htm&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGCxCyAENcgvSBrSh96yVf1Ndft_Q)mericans with Disabilities Act, which specifies that no one with a disability can be excluded from participating in federally funded programs or activities, including elementary, secondary or postsecondary schooling.

**ADA (American’s with Disabilities Act):** Law that prohibits, under certain circumstances, [discrimination based on disability.](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FDiscrimination&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGD_WNSu6pG8WVt72NH3zt_NAzHzg)

**Accommodation (Pertaining to Exceptional Children):** Changes in how test is administered that do not substantially alter what the test measures; includes changes in presentation format, response format, test setting or test timing. Appropriate accommodations are made to level the playing field, i.e., to provide equal opportunity to demonstrate knowledge.

**Accommodation (Piaget):** The process of changing existing schemata. The

**Alignment:** The effort to ensure that what teachers teach is in accord with what the curriculum says will be taught and what is assessed on official tests.

**Alphabetic principle:** The understanding that there are systematic and

Predictable relationships between written letters and spoken sounds

**Assimilate:** When children begin taking information from the world around them and incorporate these new ideas into what they already know. For instance, when a child sees someone using a spoon, they may add that use to. This is an act of assimilation.

**Assessment:** A systematic procedure for obtaining information from observation, interviews, portfolios, projects, tests, and other sources that can be used to make judgments about characteristics of preschool and kindergarten children and their programs.

**Assistive technology:** Any item, piece of equipment, product or system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of anyone with disabilities.

**Attention Processes:** What strategies a child can use to limit his/her attention when surrounded by information. These processes are use consciously and unconsciously as a means of attending to specific information.

**At Risk:** Students who have a higher than average probability of dropping out or failing school.

**Automaticity:** Skills and knowledge that are so well integrated into a person’s body of knowledge that they do it without thinking. For instance, when a person first begins using a stick shift car they might have to think very carefully about the process. Over time the skill becomes so ingrained the driver does not have to consciously attend to the process in order to achieve the goal.

**Child finds**. Requirement that states ensure that all children with disabilities are identified, located and evaluated, and determine which children are receiving special education and related services

**Communication:** The ability to give and receive thoughts, information, and ideas. Communication takes many forms – gestures, facial expressions, images, words, sentences, stories – and is accomplished through many languages.

**Comprehension:** Understanding what is heard or read. Concepts of print: Children’s understandings about the functions, structure, and conventions of written language.

**Concrete Operational:** A stage in Piaget’s cognitive development level.

**Conservation:** A major idea assimilated by children entering the Concrete Operational Stage in Piaget’s model of cognitive development. Conservation happens when children understand that certain traits are always at play, regardless of their context. For instance, let’s say 2 cups of liquid is moved from a short, fat container to a tall, thin one. A child who understands conservation will know that there are still 2 cups of liquid, whereas a child who does not will base his/her measurement on something else, like how much of the glass is full.

**Constructivism:** An approach to teaching based on research that each individual "constructs" knowledge rather than receiving it from others

**Cognition:** The act or process of thinking and understanding.

**Centration**: According to Piaget’s cognitive stages, children who have not reached the “Preoperational Stage” might concentrate on one aspect of an object and accidentally misrepresent it. A classic experiment involved the spacing of blocks put in front of children. When the same 5 blocks were placed close together, children judged that there were less blocks than when the same number were placed far apart. They were only concentrating on the length, not the number of cubes.

**Creative Curriculum**: The curriculum used by the state’s Smart Start program that targets learning in multiple developmental dimensions, including cognitive and social development.

**Developmentally appropriate (age-appropriate):** Giving your child what he or she needs right now. It wouldn’t make sense to give your toddler a pocketknife because it isn’t age appropriate toy. In the same way, it is not **developmentally appropriate** to teach your child multiplication if s/he is not ready for that skill (or addition if s/he has already mastered that skill).

**Developmentally appropriate practice:** The process of making decisions about the care and education of children based on what is known about child development and learning; what is known about the strengths, interests, and needs of the individual child; and knowledge of the

Social and cultural contexts in which children live.

**Deep/shallow processing:** A theory that the processing of information impacts memory. When information is processed only through sensory means (such as reading, hearing or saying repeatedly), it is called shallow process. On the other hand, deep processing occurs when a piece of information is analyzed conceptually, such as interpreting a book. This can trigger ideas already in the mind, making connections stronger and information more meaningful.

**Differentiation and Integration in Growth**: Differentiation is the process that a child's muscles go through as he or she gains control over specific parts of the body and head. Once children have found (differentiated) the parts of their body, they can integrate the movements and combine specific movements to perform more complex physical activities, such as walking, building a block tower or riding a bike.

**Directional Growth**

First, the growth of a child's body follows a directional pattern in three ways. Knowing this is important so expectations of a child's physical abilities are appropriate. The patterns of development are:

**Domain:** A way to categorize various aspects of human development and learning. The Guide for the Early Years addresses five domains: emotional and social development, cognitive development, language development and early literacy, health and physical development, and approaches to learning.

**Dyscalculia: Math disability** is a [specific learning](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FSpecific_learning_disability&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNHD3b-7zLZOVmDmSI0AJOpnNOdTXg) disability or difficulty involving innate difficulty in learning or comprehending [mathematics.](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FMathematics&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNHNEjuMXYW8Ctdom8ez9vPIkupoIg)

**Dysgraphia:** Learning disability resulting from the difficulty in expressing thoughts in writing and graphing. It generally refers to extremely poor handwriting.

**Dyslexia:** Learning disability that impairs a person's ability to read and which can manifest itself as a difficulty with [phonological awareness, phonological](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FPhonological_awareness&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNHR-mlgXJ0v2kx1b7jqgIH8fAjNYA) decoding, orthographic coding, auditory short-term memory

**Early intervention (EI)**. Special education and related services provided to children under age of 5.

**Egocentrism:** A cognitive limitation of children in Piaget’s “preoperational stage” where they believe that everyone thinks as they do, and that the whole world shares their feelings and desires...

**Environmental print:** Print that is encountered outside of books and is an integral part of everyday living.

**Expectations/competencies:** Appropriate learning standards for students, designed as a framework for quality. Referenced in the Guide as Widely Held Expectations for Preschool and the NC Standard Course of Study for Kindergarten.

**Expressive language:** Includes speaking and other means of communication such as sign language and the use of communication devices.

**Family:** Includes biological parents (custodial and non-custodial), adoptive parents, foster parents, step-parents, grandparents, other relatives of significance to the child, and siblings. Also, anyone who has extensive contact with a child or is a significant person in a child’s life could be included.

**Fluency:** Achieving speed and accuracy in recognizing words, comprehending connected text, and coordinating the two.

**Fine Motor:** Coordination of small muscle movements which occur e.g., in the fingers, usually in coordination with the eyes

**General to Specific Growth**: Large-muscle movement begins with waving of the arms and legs of infants, and it then develops into the more specific movements of an older child who can walk and draw a picture. So, muscle growth begins with more general abilities and becomes more specific and defined as children get older.

**Growth during Critical Periods**: Growth in certain areas of a child's physical development may be more important at particular times during childhood. For example, recent brain research indicates the first few years of life are very important in the development of the brain's growth and for intellectual competence. Similarly, the critical time for the development of motor skills is between 18 and 60 months of age (1� to 5 years).

**Goal Directed Behavior:** Babies begin to use goal directed behavior, where they start connecting their actions with results. When you see your baby reaching for a bottle or using a toy, they are using goal directed behavior.

**Gross/Fine Motor:** Large- to small- muscle development means large muscles develop in the neck, trunk, arms and legs before the small muscles in the fingers, hands, wrists and eyes develop. Children can walk before they can write or scribble.

**Head to toe or top to bottom**: A second pattern is children's muscles develop from head to toe. This is why babies can hold up their heads long before they can walk.

**IDEA**  Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

**Inside to outside or center to outside**: A third pattern is muscles develop from the center of the body first and then toward the outside of the body. Muscles around the trunk of the body develop earlier and are stronger than muscles in the hands, feet, etc.

**Inclusive:** Refers to a program in which all children – special needs students and students without special needs – learn together. Inclusive classrooms do not segregate children because of any characteristic related to physical or mental ability or language spoken.

**Individualized Education Plan:** A written plan for a child with disabilities developed by a team of professionals and the child’s family and reviewed and updated yearly.

**Integrated:** Refers to a program that brings together several subject areas and teaches them in relation to one idea or theme. A daily or weekly schedule in a classroom using an integrated curriculum model is rarely characterized by segments of time for specific subjects such as match, science, etc.

**Intentional teaching:** Refers to teaching practices that are meaningful and responsive to how children learn.

**Learning Standards:** Typically applied to the K- 12 education system and primarily deal with the content of the curriculum in our schools. Learning standards are meant to determine the education policy and systems of the schools and are a part of the standards-based education reform movement in the recent past, a movement intended to provide more a consistent education across all school districts. Learning standards are also used to develop instruments to assess the curriculum and the standards that students need to meet.

**Learning Strategies:** Mental schemes students use to memorize. Solve problems, plan, and organize their learning.

**Literacy:** Includes both reading and writing. Early reading involves developing knowledge and skills in oral language, vocabulary used in understanding the world, concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, and phonology. Early writing involves a progression of developing skills beginning with using symbols with meaning, then writing scribbles that have meaning, and then attempting to make letters.

**Locomotor Movement**: Movement of the body from place to place is involved in locomotors movement. Physical abilities such as crawling, walking, hopping, jumping, and running, leaping, galloping and skipping are examples of locomotors movement. This type of movement helps develop **gross-motor skills**.

**Long term memory:** Memory that can last as little as few days or as long as decades.

**Mainstreaming**. Practice of placing special needs children in regular classrooms for at least a part of the children’s educational program.

**Manipulative Movement**: Movement that involves controlled use of the hands and feet is reflected in manipulative movement. Physical abilities such as grasping, opening and closing hands, waving, throwing and catching are examples of manipulative movement. This type of movement helps develop **fine-motor skills and hand-eye coordination**.

**Measures of Intelligence:**

**Memory Strategies:**

**Met cognition:** Children’s knowledge and understanding of their own cognitive capabilities and thinking processes

**Non-locomotor Movement**: Movement of the body while staying in one place is involved in nonlocomotor movement. Physical abilities such as pushing, pulling, twisting, and turning, wiggling, sitting and rising are examples of nonlocomotor movement. This type of movement helps develop **balance and coordination skills**.

**Object Permanence:** A cognitive distortion involving children in the sensori-motor stage For instance, if a toy is covered up by a sheet, a baby looking at the toy will think it has disappeared.

**Optimal Tendency in Growth**: In children, growth generally tries to fulfill its potential. If growth is slowed for a particular reason, such as malnutrition, the body will try to catch up when it is able to do so. This is one reason why children may develop skills in later years even if delays occurred at an earlier point in their development.

**Pacing Guide:**

**Phonemic awareness:** The understanding that speech is made up of a series of individual sounds.

**Phonics:** Instructional practices that emphasize how spellings are related to speech sounds in systematic ways.

**Phonological awareness:** The ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds in spoken words. It is also the understanding that words are made up of speech sounds or phonemes.

**Professional development:** Refers to opportunities for program staff to increase their preparation and skills to care for and educate children. These include in-service training, workshops, college courses and degree programs, teacher exchanges, observations, coaching, seminars, mentoring, and credentialing programs.

**Preoperational stage:** The stage when children demonstrate ability to think about objects, events, or people in their absence and use symbols - gestures, words, numbers, and images to represent the objects.

**Pro-Social Behavior:** Voluntary actions intended to benefit another person.

**Purposeful Play**

**Receptive language:** Entails the understanding of connected speech and non-verbal modes such as signs, gestures, and picture symbols.

**Representational Thinking:** The ability to use a word (e.g. cookies, milk) to stand for a real object that is not present.

**Research-based:** Refers to program practices based on current best evidence from respected research and evaluation.

**Scaffolding:** Instructional technique whereby the teacher models the desired learning strategy or task, then gradually shift the responsibility to the students.

**Schemes: (or Schemata)** Sets of physical actions, mental operations, concepts, or theories people use to acquire and organize information about their world.

**Screening:** The use of a brief procedure or instrument to identify children who may need further assessment to verify developmental and/or health risks.

**Self-contained**: The students remain within the same teacher for all subject areas. The only time that the students leave the teacher is for lunch and for a scheduled activity such as music. Physical education, or library.

**Selective Attention:** Ability to focus attention on task-relevant information and to ignore irrelevant information.

**Sequential Growth**: Different areas of a child's body will grow at different times. In other words, development is orderly and occurs in a pattern. Children must be able to stand before they can walk. This pattern is evident in a number of ways, such as rolling over before sitting up, sitting up before crawling and crawling before walking, etc.

**Sensorimotor:** First of the four stages of Piaget’s cognitive development. In this stage, infants construct an understanding of the world by coordinating sensory experiences such as seeing and hearing with physical, motoric actions

**Sensory Memory:** Ability to retain impressions of sensory information after the original stimulus has ceased.

**Seriation:** The ability to order objects in a logical progression, such as from shortest to tallest.

**Short-term memory:** Capacity for holding small amount of information in mind in an active, readily available state for a short period of time.

**Speech and language disorders:** Refers to problems in communication and related areas, such as oral motor function. These delays and disorders range from simple sound substitutions to the inability to understand or use language or use the oral-motor mechanism for functional speech and feeding. Causes include hearing loss, neurological disorders, brain injury, mental retardation, drug abuse, physical impairments such as cleft lip or palate, and vocal abuse or misuse.

**Standardized assessment:** A testing instrument administered, scored, and interpreted in a standard manner. It may be either norm-referenced or criterion-referenced.

**Title 1:** Federal funded program that provides financial assistance to LEAs and schools with high numbers or percentages of poor to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards.

**Test:** One or more questions, problems, and/or tasks designed to estimate a child’s knowledge, understanding, ability, skill, and/or attitudes consistently.

**Transition:** Procedures and activities that facilitate a child’s introduction to new learning environments. Within a program’s daily schedule, it also refers to moving from one activity or place to another.

**Variations in Growth**: Children vary in their physical abilities at different ages. Different parts of the body grow at different rates. The range of physical skills to be expected in gross- or fine-motor development will be very different for infants versus preschoolers. Further information on variations in physical abilities among children at different ages is explored in a separate publication.

**Working Memory:** Ability to hold a small amount of material in memory for a short time while simultaneously processing the same or other material

**Zone of proximal development:** The difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help. The concept was developed by Lev Vygotsky, who believed the “zone” was a crucial time for full social engagement of the child in order to achieve maximum learning.

**C. Parents**

· **21st Century Program**

o **Education on Development**

§ Classroom set-up

§ Professional development of goals

o **Computer Education**

· **Parenting Education Support and Training**

**Halifax PRIDE:** The P.R.I.D.E. of Halifax (PReparing men for Intellectual, acaDemic, & Educational success) is a support program that provides 150 young men with resources and coaching intended to help them complete a college education at Halifax Community College.

“The mission of P.R.I.D.E is to improve the quality of life for all HCC students. By preparing students for responsible citizenship and success, we will help transform our educational environment and strengthen the social and economic development in our communities” (http://www.halifaxcc.edu/fli/about.htm). This program is a resource for young men to achieve their goals. Having a child at a young age does not make it impossible to gain a college education. This program aims to prove that.

Parents are Teachers, Too

§ Home Visits

§ Parenting Classes

o White Oak Parent Child Center

§ Child care

§ Lending library for parents and child care providers

o Parent resource guide for Smart Start

**D. Community Connections**

· **Church services**

o Vacation Bible School

o Sunday School

· **4-H Rural Life Center**

o Summer Camp at age 6

* Outdoor adventure
* Cooking
* Citizenship
* Agricultural exploration
* Environmental science
* Around the world

· **Early Childhood Intervention**

o BEARS

o Systems of Care/Families Supporting Families

· **Halifax Library**

o Reading to kids three times weekly

o Family Support Network

· **Families Supporting Families**

1. Provide family to family or youth to youth support on an individual family or youth level (e.g., peer-to-peer, family support partners, parent navigators)
2. Sponsor/run support groups for families or youth

**E. Curricular Scope and Sequence**

There is a pacing guide for grades kindergarten through second grade that is aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The pacing guides are appropriately aligned according to cognitive development and language and literacy development. Current pacing guides (2010-2011) were available on two of the seven elementary school websites. The guides were broken down by each of the four core subjects (math, reading, science and social studies). The organization (by goals and objectives, suggested activities and resources, and a calendar) is easy to understand for both teachers and parents.

**Part III. Child Development**

**A. Physical Development**

According to *Working with Children and Their Families: Applying What We Know*, children between the ages of three and six are growing by leaps and bounds. “At this age, children develop purposeful movements using fine motor skills.” However, even though development is occurring, it does take some time for motor skills to be refined. For this reason, observers of preschoolers and kindergarteners prefer to study patterns in a child’s physical development versus how children perform fine motor skills in isolation. This article also pointed out that the layout of a pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classroom and the scheduling of activities can hinder or aid a child’s physical development.

In a pre-kindergarten class observation, I noticed the layout of the class was tailored to the students’ physical development needs among other needs. At one station there was a student working with a hole puncher to enhance fine motor skills, specifically his ability to control the small muscles in his hands. This is one of eight physical development goals and objectives that pre-k teachers have to ensure all preschoolers meet under *The Creative Curriculum -* a component of the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program of North Carolina.

Physical Development in Preschool/Kindergarten includes four key elements, according to *Child and Adolescent Development for Educators*: gross and fine motor skills, language, reading, and written language. Preschool teachers observe these four areas as students interact within the class. During preschool years, muscles grow stronger in young children and their coordination improves. At this time young children begin to run, climb stairs, throw balls, skip, and jump. All of these skills are observed and assessed by preschool teachers and developmental changes noted.

I observed gross motor activities in a pre-kindergarten classroom. The students enjoyed rolling the ball, climbing the monkey bars, and attempted to walk across the balance beam while on the play ground. The teacher played catch with several students and modeled to some how to gallop. “The effective performance of some motor activities also depends on improvements in certain cognitive skills.” This is the second, developmental skill preschool teachers must ascertain students can master in the Creative Curriculum guidelines for Early Childhood.

MOTOR SKILLS CHECKLIST

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Age:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Gross Motor Skill | Exhibited | Not Exhibited |
| Runs Well |  |  |
| Climbs Well |  |  |
| Shows Good Balance |  |  |
| Hops on one foot |  |  |
| Skips well |  |  |
| Gallops |  |  |
| Climbs by alternating feet |  |  |
| Kicks ball well |  |  |
| Throws ball well |  |  |
| Catches ball well |  |  |

**B.**

**C. Literacy and Language Development**

Literacy Development is the ability to construct and express meaning through reading, writing, and discussing texts. Through a developmental process called emergent literature, a process that involves learning about the characteristics and processes of reading and writing from birth, children learn that print carries meaning, recognize letters, and words, and mimic true reading by actively participating in various activities including reciting memorized stories. ( Meece, Daniels p.329) The acquisition of literacy skills is perhaps more formal that of language as the latter is a process that is usually acquired without direct instruction. Frequent encounters with intentional adults who help students make connections between elements of their environment and print.

Typically, literacy development jump starts when students develop phonemic awareness and knowledge about how print represents spoken language and other skills. As children are engaged in reading activities for authentic purposes, including translating words into print, predicting meaning, and interacting emotionally with characters and events in a story, children develop the ability to decode and comprehend text over time. An integrated, or balanced approach to literacy and language development ensures that students are engaged in authentic literacy activities while simultaneously learning specific skills. An environment that promotes literacy development in early childhood settings ensures that small children are strategically exposed to print-rich environment.

Halifax County’s Pre-K Literacy and Language Development Component Halifax County’s Pre-K - 2 curriculum is aligned to the of the [North Carolina Standard Course of Study](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ncpublicschools.org%2Fcurriculum%2Flanguagearts%2Fscos%2F2004%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGQ3adhZzDqWMa2k-dXDvEnqVHqSg)  and The Creative Curriculum (below)

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| --- |
| **The Creative Curriculum Goals and Objectives at a Glance** |
| I. Listening and Speaking  38. Hears and discriminates the sounds of language  39. Expresses self using words and expanded sentences  40. Understands and follows oral directions  41. Answers questions  42. Asks questions  43. Actively participates in conversations      II. Reading and Writing  44. Enjoys and values reading  45. Demonstrates understanding  of print concepts  46. Demonstrates knowledge of  the alphabet  47. Uses emerging reading skill to make meaning from print  48. Comprehends and interprets meaning from books and  other texts  49. Understands the purpose  of writing  50. Writes letters and words |

D. Self-concept, Identity, and Motivation

Erik Erickson, a developmental theorist, established a foundation for psychosocial development. He believed this developmental process, which stressed feelings and social relationships, was a process that evolved over a life time.Based on his theory, as children matured they constantly are challenged by situations which produces a positive or negative result according to their responses. He believed that these outcomes, whether positive or negative, impacted their future. Erickson’s theory examines the correlation between a child’s social environment to the degree that a child’s needs are met. Erickson’s stages of development focuses primarily on the concerns of educators in an attempt to understand what a childs needs are. From birth to 1 year, children establish trust, through consistent food, care, shelter, and attention, if this is mot established, children will develop mistrust. If trust is gained , then they may venture out more independently in the next stage of development (1-3 years) and experiment with autonomy. Although shame and doubt may surface at this stage, children are learning to become more independent. According to Erickson, at age 3 to 5 children need to be given opportunities to act independently, if not provided a chance to practice initiating their own actions, they develop a sense of guilt. Erickson’s studies, although flawed, are beneficial in helping others understand the importance of psychological development.

The development of self concept refers to the growth, maturity, and understanding of personal beliefs, behavior, and knowledge of self. Children with a sense of self, high esteem, and clear concept, often perform better in school. Educators concerns revolve around the correlation between how a child’s personal perception effects their school performance. During children’s early school years, self esteem is increased with peer interaction. The school is a vital place for these interactions to occur. The school fosters self esteem through modeling and displaying empathy, involving students in the decision making processes, and promoting independence. Students perception of self increasing or decreases self esteem, this ideas impacts their future.

According to Erickson, identify is the ability to commit ones self to forming a belief(Meece 336). Children began to become increasingly aware of ethnic differences by age three. Children who are successful in school, popular, and respected by peers and parents have little individual difference in their perception, regardless of race.

Motivation, in regards to achievement, addresses the factors that initiate, sustain or terminate behavior in academic situations (Meece p. 380). Many theorist believe that internal factors initiates motivation: physiological, social, or psychological. Maslow’s hiercharcy of needs classified each need as high or low. Most contemporary theorist focus on student’s belief, values, goals, and cognitive process(Meece p.387) A child’s home life should support and practice motivational building strategies. Parents utilizing strategies to increase independence and autonomy assist in the development of intrinsically motivated children. As children mature, their motivation dwindles, schools and educators must be equipped to maintain a high level of eagerness in students.

To increase motivation, caregivers, parents and teacher can:

* Provide challenging and engaging learning experiences
* Utilize various learning activities
* Genuinely stimulate students minds by asking higher thinking level questions
* Set realistic attainable goals
* Allow students to select independent study
* Provide quick and accurate feedback
* Acknowledge personal accomplishments
* Allow students to create rubrics
* Use peer groupings

**E. Peer Relations & Moral Development**

**Peer Relations**

In order for a child to develop and learn in a healthy and normal way it is important to meet the basic needs for your inner self, such as your emotions, affections, and security. Even though individual children develop at their own pace, all children progress through a similar pattern of physical, cognitive, and emotional growth, and change.

### 

### Peer Groups

The term peer group refers to an individual’s small, relatively intimate group of peers who interact on a regular basis (often referred to as a clique). Peer groups consist of individuals who share friendship, hang around and talk to each other as well as do activities together. As children develop into adolescents, they spend an increasing amount of time with their peers compared to their parents or other adults. The nature of peer groups also changes during adolescence. Typically, in early adolescence peer groups are single-sex but by middle adolescence mixed-sex peer groups are more prevalent.

**Peer Popularity and Rejection**

Popular children

· Give out reinforcement

· Listen carefully

· Maintain open lines of communication

· Are happy and control their negative emotions

· Show enthusiasm and concern for others

· Use self confidence without being conceited

Neglected Children

· Have low rates of interaction with peers

· Often described as being shy by peers

Rejected Children

· Often have more serious adjustment problems than those who are neglected

**Moral Development**

Kohlberg’s theory of moral development focuses on children’s conceptions of rules, fairness, and justice. Preschool children believe rules should be obeyed because they lead to rewards and punishment. Elementary children view rules as important for maintaining social order. During adolescence and adulthood, people begin to understand that rules are intended to help protect basic human rights.

**Moral/Character Education**

Educators can help children differentiate between the norms and conventions of their culture and the universal moral concerns for justice (fairness) and human welfare. Five educational practices enable teachers to engage in moral education.

* Moral education should focus on issues of justice, fairness and human welfare.
* Effective moral education programs are integrated within the curriculum, rather than treated separately as a special program or unit.
* Moral discussion promotes moral development when the students use "transactive" discussion patterns, are at somewhat different moral levels, and are free to disagree about the best solution to a moral dilemma.
* Cooperative goal structures promote both moral and academic growth.
* Firm, fair, and flexible classroom management practices and rules contribute to students' moral growth. Teachers should respond to the harmful or unjust consequences of moral transgressions, rather than to broken rules or unfulfilled social expectations.

· Moral Development and the General Curriculum

· Moral education should be integrated within the curriculum and not take the form of a "special" program or unit. A program that is simply inserted into the curriculum carries with it an inherent artificiality and discontinuity that renders such interventions incompatible with the more general aims of teachers and students. The life of such programs is generally brief.

Students’ success depends on the teachers. Educators have to push high academic standards and use creative strategies for learning in ethnically diverse classrooms. We must encourage positive personal contact and make school and community a team. Children should be encouraged to explore their world, discover knowledge, and think critically with careful monitoring and meaningful guidance from the teacher.

**IV. Data Collection**

**Interviews:**

Interviewer: **Hope Walker**

**Interview I with Student A: What is a Good Teacher**

Q: What is a Good Teacher?

What makes a good teacher? What kinds of things does a good teacher do or say?

A: They give kids candy…they help us learn…they make us happy…they tell us to be

quiet.

Q: What makes a not so good teacher?

A: Ms. Bryant . (Why?) She fuss all the time.

Q:Why do you think she fuss all the time?

A: I don’t know.

Lesson learned: Even the youngest children reflect upon their teacher’s behavior,

attitudes, and qualities.

**Interview II with Student A: Reading Strategies and Purposes**

Q: Why do people read?

A: So they can read about animals.

Q: Why do you read?

A: Because my teacher tell me to

Q: Do you read just for fun?

A: I play kickball. That’s fun.

**Interview I with Parent A: Conceptions of Intelligence**

Q: How do you define intelligence?

A: I think intelligence is the ability to understand…to think. I think intelligence is

being able to analyze information and solve problems.

Q: What are some examples of how students demonstrate intelligence? Think about

your experience as a parent and as a long term substitute teacher.

A: Well…when they ask good questions….questions that will give them information

they need. Intelligent students seek information to gain understanding.

Q: What can teachers do to encourage students’ intellectual development?

A: Teacher must be knowledgeable….they have to know what they are doing. They

have to be willing to get help when they don’t know something instead of just letting

stuff go. They have to be good problem-solvers.

Q: How do your views on intelligence affect your parenting style?

A: Intelligence is also a behavior …it can be taught. I input intelligence into my

children by modeling intelligent behaviors. I encourage them to read and I ask them

a lot of questions.

**Observations:**

October 2010

Observation 1: Teacher-Student Interaction (Adapted from Form 5.7)

Target Child: 1st Grade, Female Student A

Event #1: 1st Grade Regular Ed Classroom Setting ( Whole Class Instruction/Circle Time)

Date: 10/5/10 Time 9:35

Initiator: Teacher

Bid: Name

Request: Question

Brief Description: Student was asked to name an animal

Response: Immediate

Affect: Neutral

Brief Description: Teacher neither smiled nor frowned at child; follow- up

questions were not asked; no explanatory feedback was given ( as was for other

select students); this was the first and only interaction between teacher and target

student in approximately 30 minutes

Student A was less engaged during most of the observed period. She spent time

focusing on her nails (acrylic with fancy blue designs) , especially when the teacher

was addressing the class. During the interview, she proved herself to be articulate

and thoughtful. She became a little distracted at times when other students walked

by ( we were in a hallway; quiet spaces were not available at the time). She did not

participate in “stretch” activity but did not appear to be sleepy or grumpy. When sent

to her desk to do a picture walk, she engaged with the other children quickly.

Student doesn’t “engage” when in large groups; At her table ( with three other students) she engaged after teacher stopped talking; didn’t seem to listen to teacher; didn’t seem very

enthusiastic about learning

Journal Time: Teacher didn’t adequately prepare students for the writing task.

Teacher led students through a brainstorming session in which they were asked to

“name an animal that lives in the wild.” Teacher did not elicit responses that would

encourage students to think about the characteristics of the animals they named.

After about five minutes of brainstorming a list of animals ( which the teacher wrote

inside a large bubble map), students were asked to return to their seats and write

about their favorite animal. Students simply went to their seats and wrote the names of several

animals. Students were not given the opportunity to share what they wrote.

Whole Class/Teacher-Led Discussion: Lots of recall questions; lots of “repeat after

me”

Literacy and Language Development: Knowing questions ( Bloom’s) were asked

by the teacher; Students did not ask many questions; Word attack skills were not

taught; whole word instruction only

After approximately 40 minutes, not teachers or students had asked an

Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, or Evaluating question. Outside of a Journal

entry, students were not asked to create anything. Question and answer sessions

dealt with concrete understandings despite this being a continuation of a lesson that

started a week prior to the scheduled visit/observation.

Classroom Management: Teacher did have control of classroom; discipline was

direct, yet polite

Observation 2: Stanford Preschool Form

Student B ( Male, EC- PreK)

**Observations**

Observer Name **Hope Walker**

Time at beginning of observation **10:30**

Time at end of observation **11:30 (all times approximate)**

First Name:  **Pre-K, EC, Male, (Student B)**

Age: 5

How long at school: **Two years**

Number of siblings: **Only Child**

*Physical Development*

How does the child compare in size and weight with the other children?

He’s about the same height, but much slimmer.

Compare this child with the other children in skills requiring the use of his/her body:

Note the way the child walks. Does the walk seem typical for this group of children, or is it different? **He has cerebral palsy and is no longer heavily reliant on his wheelchair. However, he does walk rather uneasily when compared to his peers.**

Note the way the child runs. Did you see the child skip, jump, or not?

**He does not run, skip, or jump. He spends most of his time crawling, both inside the classroom and on the playground.**

Describe how the child goes up and down stairs, climbs on toys such as a jungle gym, and rides a tricycle or other wheeled toys.

**Not observed.**

Compare this child with other children in dexterity and small muscle coordination.

Describe the way the child works with small items such as puzzles, pegs, art materials, dressing dolls, scissors, etc.

**Outside, he crawls over to a football that has landed near him. With a slight struggle, he picks it up and throws it to another boy. He does not attempt to handle small objects inside the classroom during the observation period. He does, however, pick up a plastic lid and licks it.**

**Describe the child's skills in putting on his clothing, buttoning, zipping, washing and drying his hands, and eating. Can the child tie shoes? Upon entering the room, the teacher is changing his clothes (?) so I assume he either cannot dress himself.**

How much time does the child remain in activities which require moving around the room, verses activities which require sitting still? How much is this behavior influenced by the program?

**He spends most of his time moving around the room. This is largely influenced by the program as it is free choice/learning centers time when he comes in from the playground.**

*Cognitive Development*

Compare this child's level of development with that of the other children in the following skill areas:

About how long is the child's attention span in different activities?

**Less than five minutes; no one would play with him.**

Is the child generally alert and able to solve tasks and problems?

**He is very much alert. Though he could not find another student who would play with him, he did not have a tantrum or become physically aggressive.**

Describe the child's memory skills: e.g., ability to remember people, directions, stories, songs and related past experiences.

**Not observed.**

*Language and Literacy Development*

How would you describe the language development of this child: articulation, fluidity, volume, vocabulary, sentence formation, and creative language. Write down some speech samples.

**He is not articulate. He makes moaning /grunting sounds.**

Did you observe the child's knowledge of any of the following: colors, size, numbers, time, and letters? Any other concepts?

**Part of choice time involved students picking their name tag off the board and attaching it to the Velcro strip of the center they chose to attend. He made no attempt to remove his name tag.**

Did the child participate in any musical activities, or seem interested in books or stories? Describe and compare with other children.

**He did not seem interested in any musical activities or seem interested in books or stories. He did not attempt to play with a book; teacher did not share picture books during choice time.**

*Self-concept, Identity and Motivation*

Does the child seek the companionship of adults in preference to children? Does the child have an attachment to a particular adult?

**The child went from student to student in an attempt to find a playmate. When students would not play with him, he sought the attention of the teacher’s aide who sat in the block area.**

How does the child seek adult approval and help?

**The same as he does with adults: he moves close to the individual and makes a sound and smiles.**

Does the child accept adults' suggestions and redirection? What is the child's response to limits set by adults?

**The child generally accepts redirection. At one point, he and the teacher’s aide exchanged hits. ( He hit the aide, she hit him back.)**

How does the child show feelings of happiness and unhappiness? What other feelings did you see the child express?

**He laughs when he’s happy. He makes a grunting noise when he’s not. Other children laughed when they were happy. One child sort of screamed when she became unhappy.**

Use of activities

Does this child use creative materials (e.g., clay, paint) and how? Compare with other children.

**No. Other children played with dolls, blocks, and small toys. Centers with clay and paint were not observed.**

Did the child participate in any musical activities, or seem interested in books or stories? Describe and compare with other children.

**No.**

Did you see the child use dramatic play (pretending to be something or someone else)? Describe the play.

**No.**

*Peer Relations & Moral Development*

How does the child show affection for another child or adult?

**He smiles and tries to play with them.**

Did you see the child attempt to hurt another child either verbally or physically? What seemed to be the provocation? How was the situation handled?

**No, however, the teacher reports that he can sometimes become physically aggressive and lash out at both students and teachers for no apparent reason.**

Did you see the child respond to frustration, such as having to wait for a toy? What did the child do?

**I watched him get slapped in the face at least three times by other children. He was also pushed a couple of times. Still, he kept trying to playmate. He did not h hit or push another child during the observed period of time. The actions on other children towards him went unnoticed or unchecked.**

**I did not see what caused him to suddenly hit the teacher’s aide as I was having a conversation with the lead teacher. But I did hear a certain grunt as he and the teacher’s aide as her hand went up ( as if to hit him).**

How does the child enter group play, e.g., immediately joins in or stands and observes first? Describe the child's behavior in group play (e.g., leader, follower, both?)

**He sits and observes first. Then he moves in close to the person and smiles. He tried to join in a game of kickball with two other children but they chose not to play with him.**

Does the child seem to prefer to play alone? Describe and compare the child's behavior with that of the other children. During what activities does the child prefer to play alone?

**It’s obvious that he wants to play with the other kids but they won’t play with him. They seem to be in little cliques. While in the block area with the teacher’s aide, another boy tells him to “go away.” The teacher aide laughs and repeats what the child said to the lead teacher. The target child looked sad. The other child was not corrected.**

Does the child tend to play with a particular friend(s)? Describe.

**Again, other students in this inclusion classroom did not play with him. They either hit him, run away, or say something mean to him.**

When this child and another do not agree, what does the child do? (e.g., give in, compromise, holler for help, etc.)

**He remains calm (even when he’s getting slapped).**

#### Impressions of the Child

What do you see as this child's strengths developmentally?

**Physically, he is making progress. He makes use of his gross motor skills in ways that are challenging for the typical child with cerebral palsy.**

Are there skills that are less well developed relative to those of the child's classmates?

**He does not create words yet. He also drools a lot. Perhaps the muscles in his lips and mouth are weak or he simply doesn’t have the capacity to control them.**

What about this child makes the most lasting impression on you?

**He is persistent and seems to be determined to find happiness. Although he was not accepted or preferred by students in his class, he never gave up trying to find someone to play with. He would probably flourish in a more nurturing environment where children were taught tolerance, care, and compassion and all adults were more in tuned with the social and emotional needs of all their students.**

**II. Environment**

What do you notice about the layout of the rooms, the equipment, and materials that are conducive to working well with a group of young children?

**There were lots of open areas in the classroom. The playground was fenced in.**

**Playground equipment was in good condition and offered students a variety of activity.**

Anything you would add, change or question in the environment?

**I would add more environmental print inside the classroom. I would also add a sand and water area with brain toys that fostered academic growth and stimulation. I would add a stage for dramatic play and a shade area. I would also add more technology and require that an organized game be in play when children were outdoors and that a story was been shared during free choice time.**

Describe the outdoor playground or indoor gross motor activity areas.

**The outdoor playground had available a hard surface with space for games, a sand play area, structures for creative play, climbing and swinging bars, and slides of adjustable heights.**

What are the rules that maximize safety during gross motor play?

**No hitting.**

# III. Staff

Which teachers seem particularly good? What do they do or not do with children, which leads you to your conclusion?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Give examples you observe of the staff doing the following:** | How did the children respond? |
| Praising/ reinforcing a child's behavior |  |
| Redirecting (e.g. to another activity) |  |
| Disciplining |  |
| Comforting |  |
| Motivating, teaching problem solving |  |
| Being honest/building trust |  |

List examples of some topics of casual conversation observed between children and staff:

Staff Comments (record of positive or negative comments made by staff to individual children or groups of children)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | + Comments | - Comments |
| Individual child | I love cake. What kind of cake do we have? Let’s put candles on it. | Don’t hit…  Don’t do that…  You can’t play with that now… |
| Group of children | Do you want some cake too? |  |

Part VI:

**Staff Improvement Goals**

Goal 1

Pre-K-2 teachers and teacher assistants will be given professional development for early childhood development, including strategies for guiding constructive play and methods for collecting records for the creative curriculum. Teacher and teacher assistants must be able to explain the importance of different developmental process and also record and maintain student data folders by the beginning of the 2011 school year.

Goal 2

By the 2011 school year, teacher and teacher assistants will implement student data folders in all Early childhood classrooms tracking development utilized in The Creative Curriculum matrix and plan parent meetings for review three times per year.

Goal 3:

Increase by 50% the level of rigor and literacy rich activities in grades K-2 classrooms by providing Professional Development addressing phonemic awareness and literacy development. Teachers will be provided with support by highly skilled Early Childhood personnel. In a six-month period, teachers will document their use of literacy activities as it supports individualized Literacy and Language Development for all students in their classroom.

**Parental Involvement Strategies:**

Goal 1

Halifax County will increase communication with parents, specifically promoting practical resources available in the county. By the beginning of the 2011 school year, structures will be in place to advertise district resources to parents, including Smart Start program and the White Oak Center. Communication strategies should include both hard and soft copy advertisements.

Goal 2

By the beginning of the 2011 school year, Halifax County will provide early childhood education classes for adults and new parents. Classes will focus on developmental dimensions addressed in the Creative Curriculum, familiarizing adults with the milestones in literacy, physical, cognitive, emotional, social and moral development.

VII: Resources and Citations

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